

## **Porous Media Approach for Modeling Closed Cell Foam**

Louis J. Ghosn  
Ohio Aerospace Institute  
Brook Park, Ohio

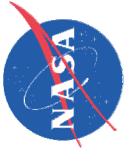
Roy M. Sullivan  
NASA Glenn Research Center  
Cleveland, Ohio

Proposed Abstract for the  
[43rd Annual Technical Meeting](#)  
[Society of Engineering Science](#)  
[August 13-16th, 2006](#)

In order to minimize boil off of the liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen and to prevent the formation of ice on its exterior surface, the Space Shuttle External Tank (ET) is insulated using various low-density, closed-cell polymeric foams. Improved analysis methods for these foam materials are needed to predict the foam structural response and to help identify the foam fracture behavior in order to help minimize foam shedding occurrences. This presentation describes a continuum based approach to modeling the foam thermo-mechanical behavior that accounts for the cellular nature of the material and explicitly addresses the effect of the internal cell gas pressure.

A porous media approach is implemented in a finite element frame work to model the mechanical behavior of the closed cell foam. The ABAQUS general purpose finite element program is used to simulate the continuum behavior of the foam. The soil mechanics element is implemented to account for the cell internal pressure and its effect on the stress and strain fields. The pressure variation inside the closed cells is calculated using the ideal gas laws. The soil mechanics element is compatible with an orthotropic materials model to capture the different behavior between the rise and in-plane directions of the foam.

The porous media approach is applied to model the foam thermal strain and calculate the foam effective coefficient of thermal expansion. The calculated foam coefficients of thermal expansion were able to simulate the measured thermal strain during heat up from cryogenic temperature to room temperature in vacuum. The porous media approach was applied to an insulated substrate with one inch foam and compared to a simple elastic solution without pore pressure. The porous media approach is also applied to model the foam mechanical behavior during subscale laboratory experiments. In this test, a foam layer sprayed on a metal substrate is subjected to a temperature variation while the metal substrate is stretched to simulate the structural response of the tank during operation. The thermal expansion mismatch between the foam and the metal substrate and the thermal gradient in the foam layer causes high tensile stresses near the metal/foam interface that can lead to delamination.



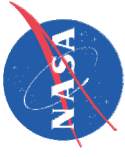
# **Porous Media Approach for Modeling Closed Cell Foam**

**Louis J. Ghosn**  
*Senior Researcher*  
*Ohio Aerospace Institute*

and

**Roy M. Sullivan**  
*Material Research Engineer*  
*NASA Glenn Research Center*

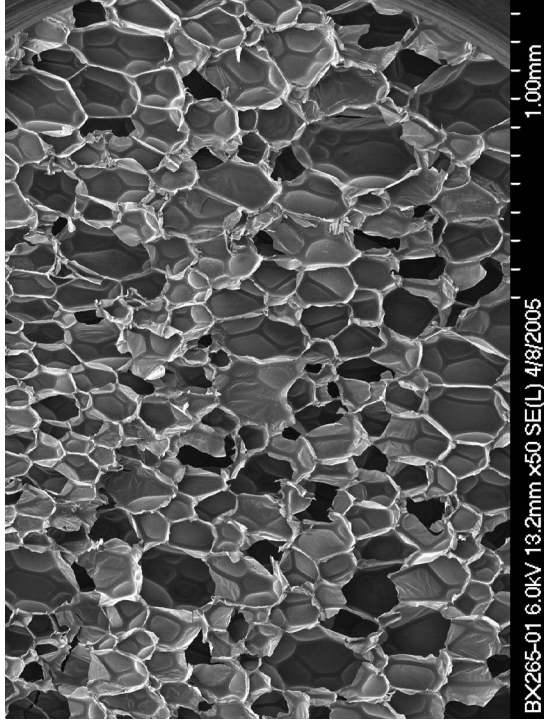
43rd Annual Technical Meeting  
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# SOFI Closed Cell Foam

Rise

BX-265

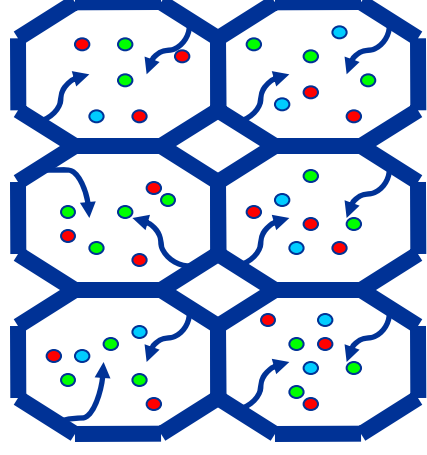


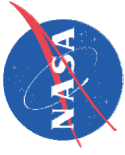
In-plane

Space Shuttle External Tank Foams

- BX265
- NCFI
- PDL

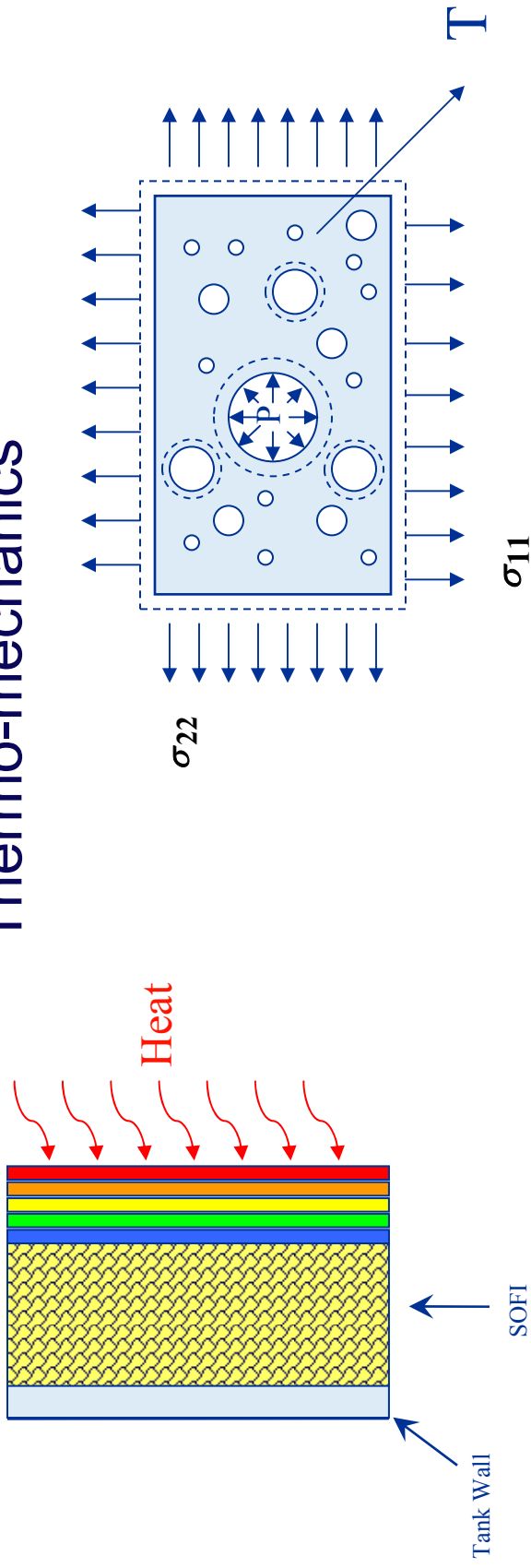
- 97% void filled with entrapped gases
- Polymeric cell walls
- Anisotropic properties
- Polymer out-gas upon heating:
  - weakens cell walls
  - creates additional internal pressures
  - results in a unique thermal expansion behavior





# Application of Porous Media Principles to Foam

## Thermo-mechanics



### Generalized 3-D Constitutive Relations for Porous Media

$$\sigma_{ij} = C_{ijkl} \left( e_{kl} - \alpha_{kk}^T \Delta T \right) - \alpha_{ij}^P P$$

 $C_{ijkl}$ 

Elastic stiffness tensor

 $P$ 

Cell internal pressure

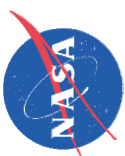
 $\alpha_{ij}^P$ 

Stress-Pressure coupling tensor

 $\Delta T = (T - T_{ref})$  Change in temperature

 $\alpha_{kk}^T$ 

Coefficient of thermal expansions



# SOFI Mechanical Properties from FEA Unit Cell Model

BX-265

Temp ( C )	E11 (MPa)	E22 (MPa)	E33 (MPa)	nu12	nu13	nu32
-251	10.97	10.97	39.89	0.488	0.143	0.520
-196	10.97	10.97	39.89	0.488	0.143	0.520
24	4.99	4.99	18.13	0.488	0.143	0.520

NCFI

Temp ( C )	E11 (MPa)	E22 (MPa)	E33 (MPa)	nu12	nu13	nu32
-251	9.96	9.96	45.75	0.528	0.114	0.524
-196	9.96	9.96	45.75	0.528	0.114	0.524
24	4.53	4.53	20.80	0.528	0.114	0.524

PDL

Temp ( C )	E11 (MPa)	E22 (MPa)	E33 (MPa)	nu12	nu13	nu32
-253	31.85	31.85	49.96	0.362	0.249	0.391
-196	25.03	25.03	39.26	0.362	0.249	0.391
24	12.74	12.74	19.99	0.362	0.249	0.391

with  $G_{12} = \frac{E_{11}}{2(1+\nu_{12})}$  (in - plane isotropic)  $G_{31}^* = \frac{2 G_{12}}{(1+R)}$  (Rise)

\* Ref. Gibson Ashby



## Calibration of Thermal Expansion Coefficients

$$e_{ij} = P S_{ijkl} \alpha_{kl}^P + \alpha_{ij}^T \Delta T$$

Assuming  $\alpha_{ij}^P = [I]$

$$\varepsilon_{11} = (p_{cell} - p_{ext}) \frac{1 - \nu_{12} - \nu_{13}}{E_{11}} + \alpha_{11}^T (T - T_{ref})$$

$$\varepsilon_{22} = (p_{cell} - p_{ext}) \frac{1 - \nu_{21} - \nu_{23}}{E_{22}} + \alpha_{22}^T (T - T_{ref})$$

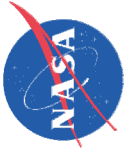
$$\varepsilon_{33} = (p_{cell} - p_{ext}) \frac{1 - \nu_{31} - \nu_{32}}{E_{33}} + \alpha_{33}^T (T - T_{ref})$$

Solving for  $\alpha_{kk}^T$  yields:

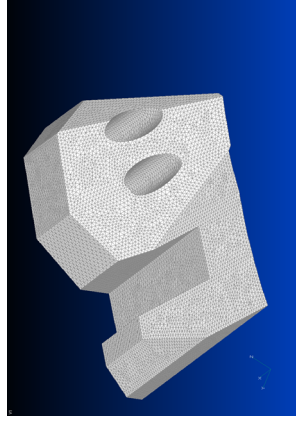
$$\alpha_{11}^T = \frac{\varepsilon_{11}}{T - T_{ref}} - \frac{p_{cell} - p_{ext}}{T - T_{ref}} \cdot \frac{1 - \nu_{12} - \nu_{13}}{E_{11}}$$

$$\alpha_{22}^T = \frac{\varepsilon_{22}}{T - T_{ref}} - \frac{p_{cell} - p_{ext}}{T - T_{ref}} \cdot \frac{1 - \nu_{21} - \nu_{23}}{E_{22}}$$

$$\alpha_{33}^T = \frac{\varepsilon_{33}}{T - T_{ref}} - \frac{p_{cell} - p_{ext}}{T - T_{ref}} \cdot \frac{1 - \nu_{31} - \nu_{32}}{E_{33}}$$



# Flow Chart for Pore Pressure Analysis Approach



Finite Element Mesh  
of Foam Application

ABAQUS FE Thermal  
Analysis Solution

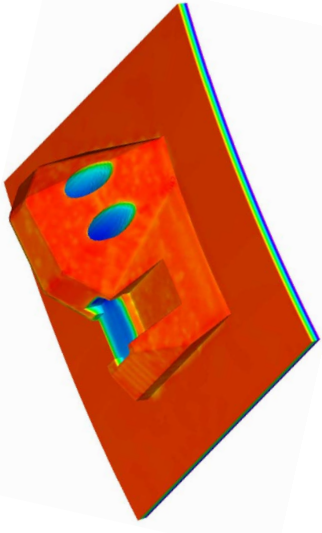
Nodal temperatures:  
Temperature Distributions in the Foam

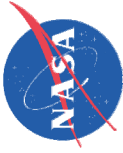
Pore Pressure  
Subroutine

Nodal internal cell gas pressures:  
Pressure Distributions in the Foam

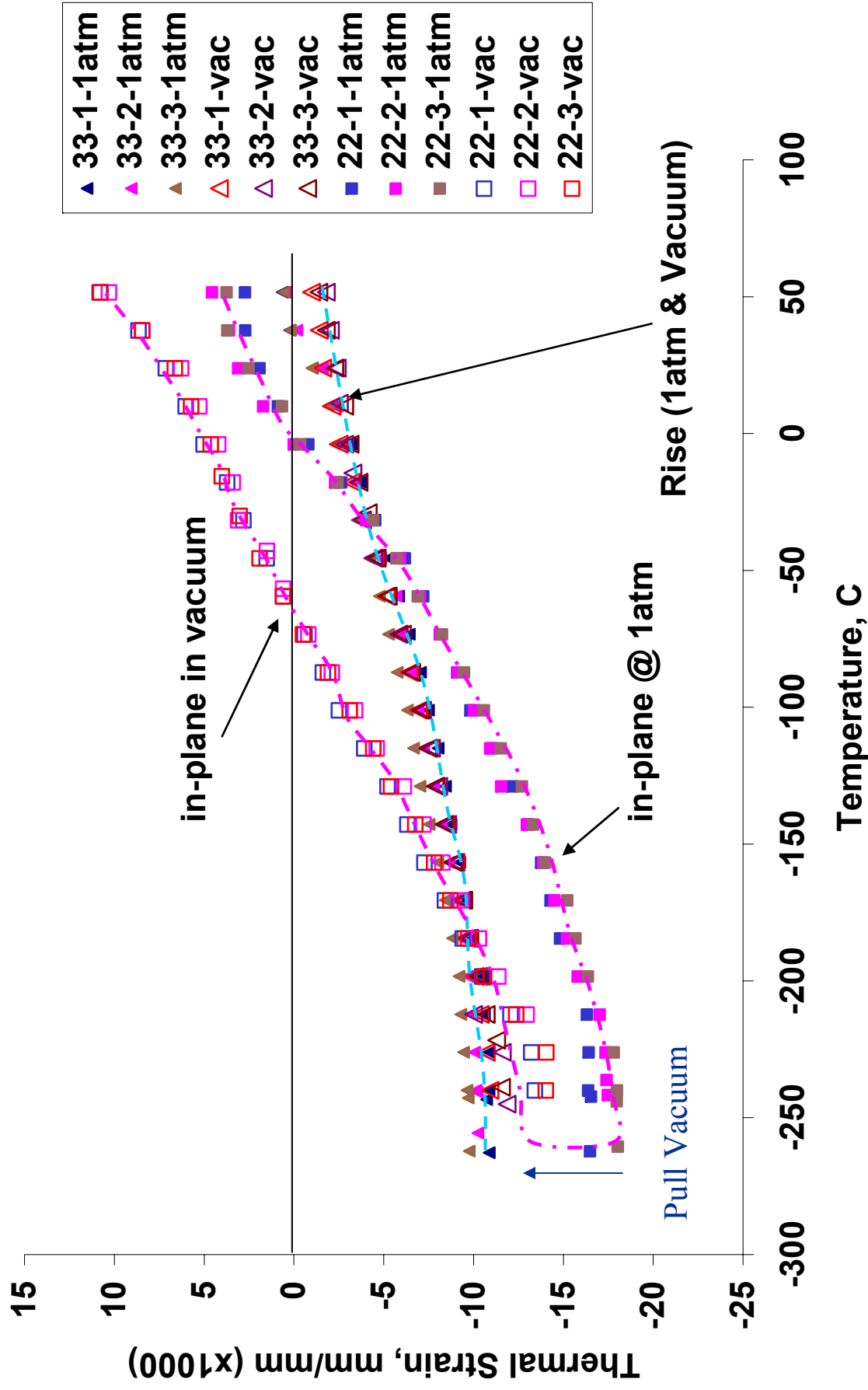
ABAQUS FE  
Porous Media  
Analysis Solution

Solid Skeleton  
Stress Distribution



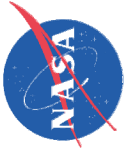


## NCFI-24-124

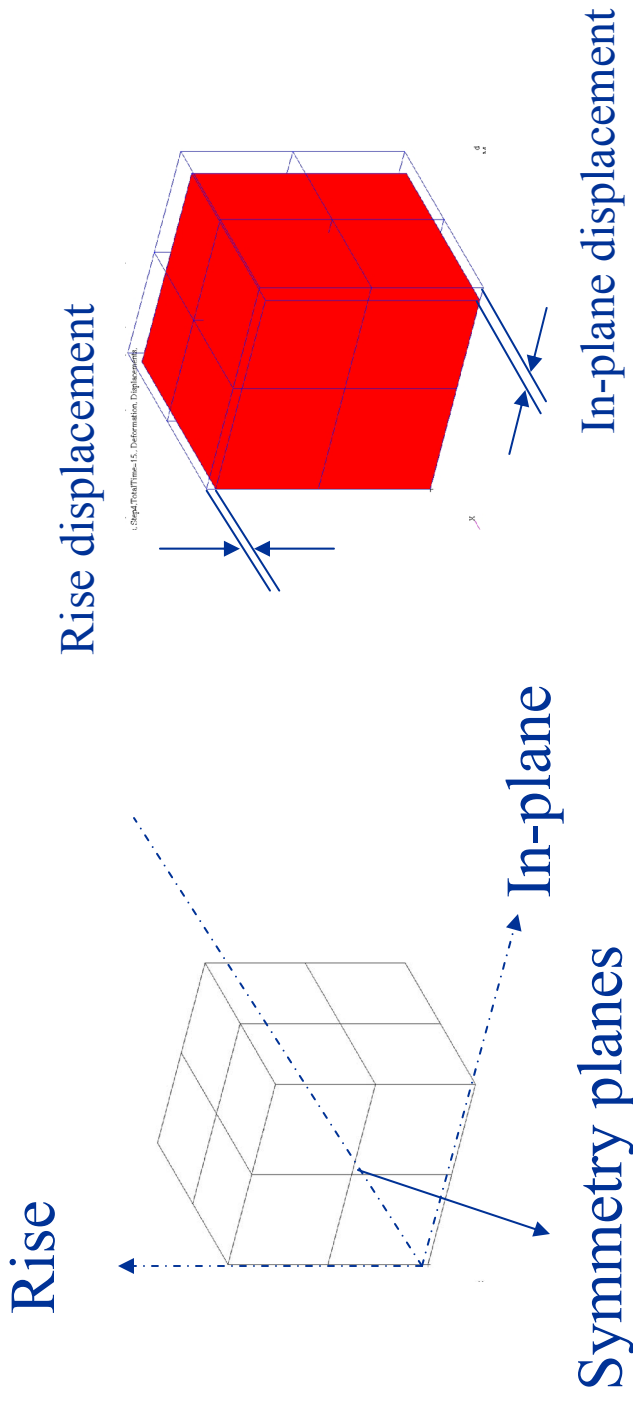


Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613



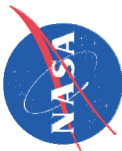


## Porous-Media applied to thermal-strain experiment



### Note

- Use the 1-atm thermal strain for calibrating the Porous-Media CTE
- Verify the CTE and pore pressure using the vacuum data



# Calibrated SOFI CTE

BX-265

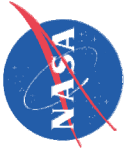
Temp ( C )	$\alpha^{T11}$ (1/C)	$\alpha^{T22}$ (1/C)	$\alpha^{T33}$ (1/C)
-253	5.90E-05	5.90E-05	3.68E-05
-196	6.90E-05	6.90E-05	4.23E-05
-73	8.94E-05	8.94E-05	5.32E-05
24	<b>1.65E-04</b>	<b>1.65E-04</b>	<b>9.96E-05</b>
93	2.40E-04	2.40E-04	1.46E-04

NCFI 24-124

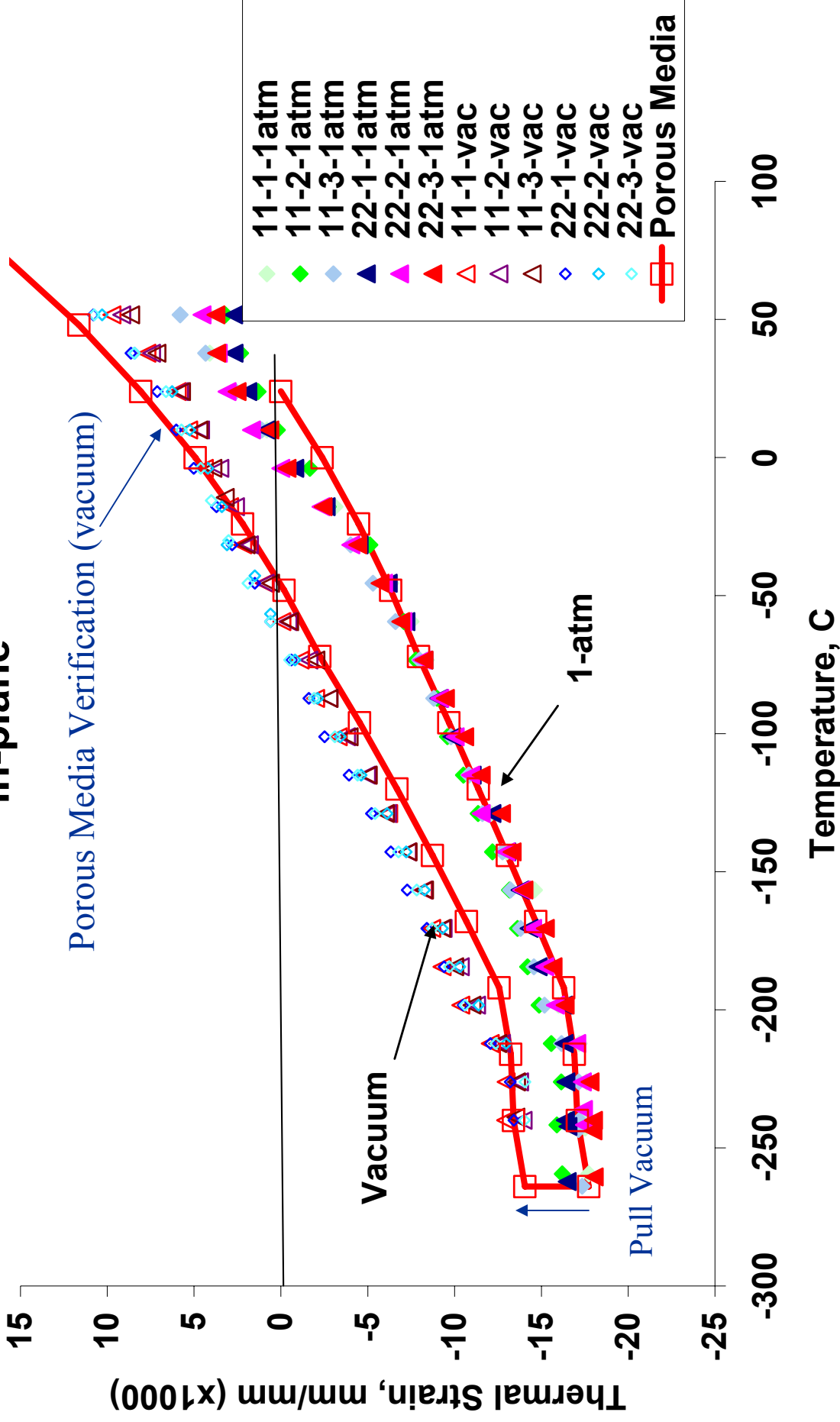
Temp ( C )	$\alpha^{T11}$ (1/C)	$\alpha^{T22}$ (1/C)	$\alpha^{T33}$ (1/C)
-253	4.92E-05	4.92E-05	3.72E-05
-196	6.29E-05	6.29E-05	4.59E-05
-73	6.34E-05	6.34E-05	6.23E-05
24	7.80E-05	7.80E-05	8.21E-05
93	9.26E-05	9.26E-05	1.02E-04
149	2.03E-04	2.03E-04	1.93E-04

PDL-1034

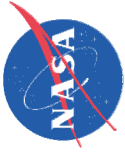
Temp ( C )	$\alpha^{T11}$ (1/C)	$\alpha^{T22}$ (1/C)	$\alpha^{T33}$ (1/C)
-253	4.61E-05	4.61E-05	4.12E-05
-196	5.67E-05	5.67E-05	5.14E-05
-73	7.02E-05	7.02E-05	6.40E-05
24	1.35E-04	1.35E-04	1.40E-04
93	1.99E-04	1.99E-04	2.16E-04
149	4.76E-04	4.76E-04	5.63E-04



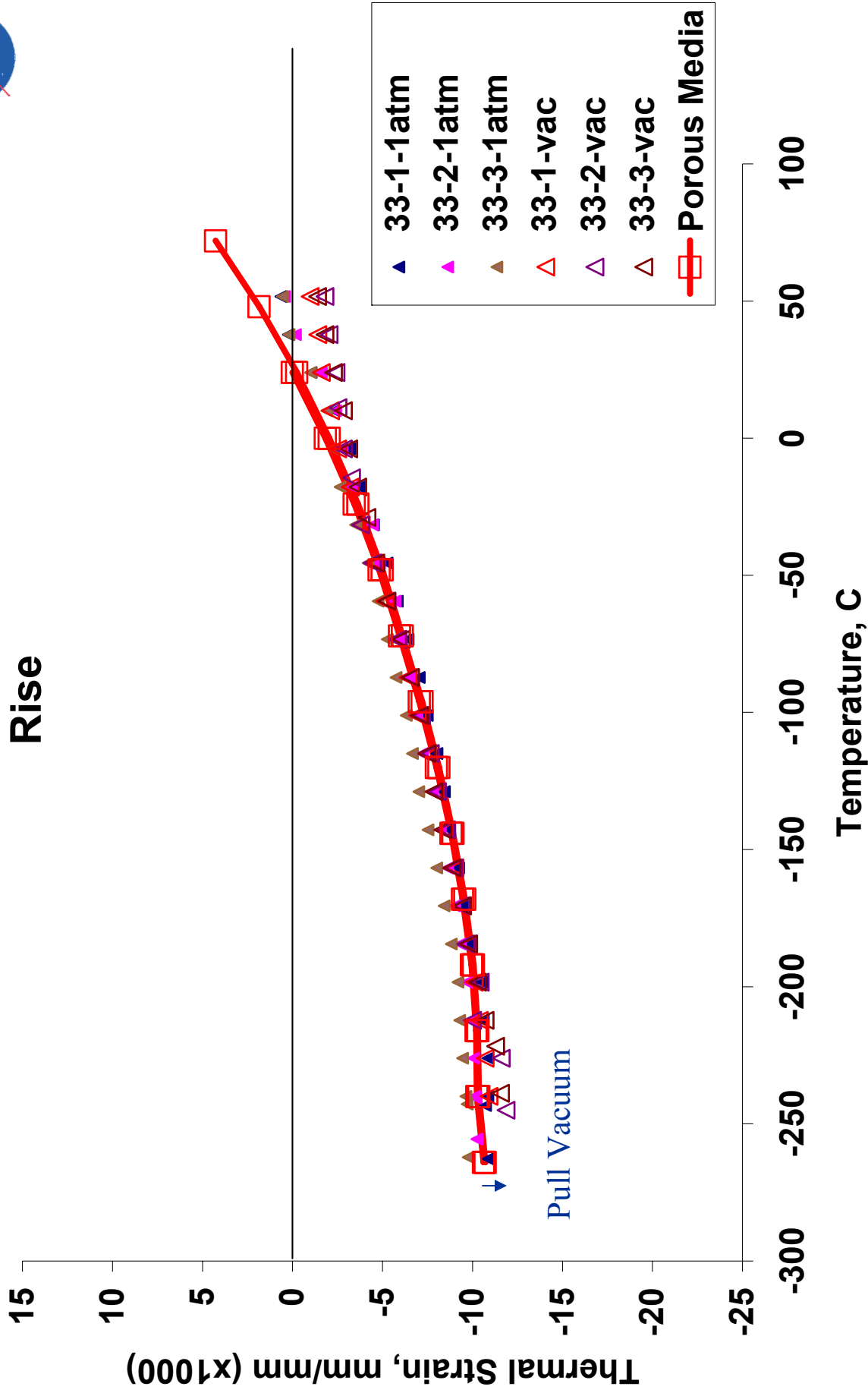
## NCFI-24-124 in-plane



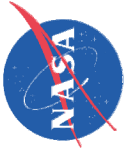
Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613



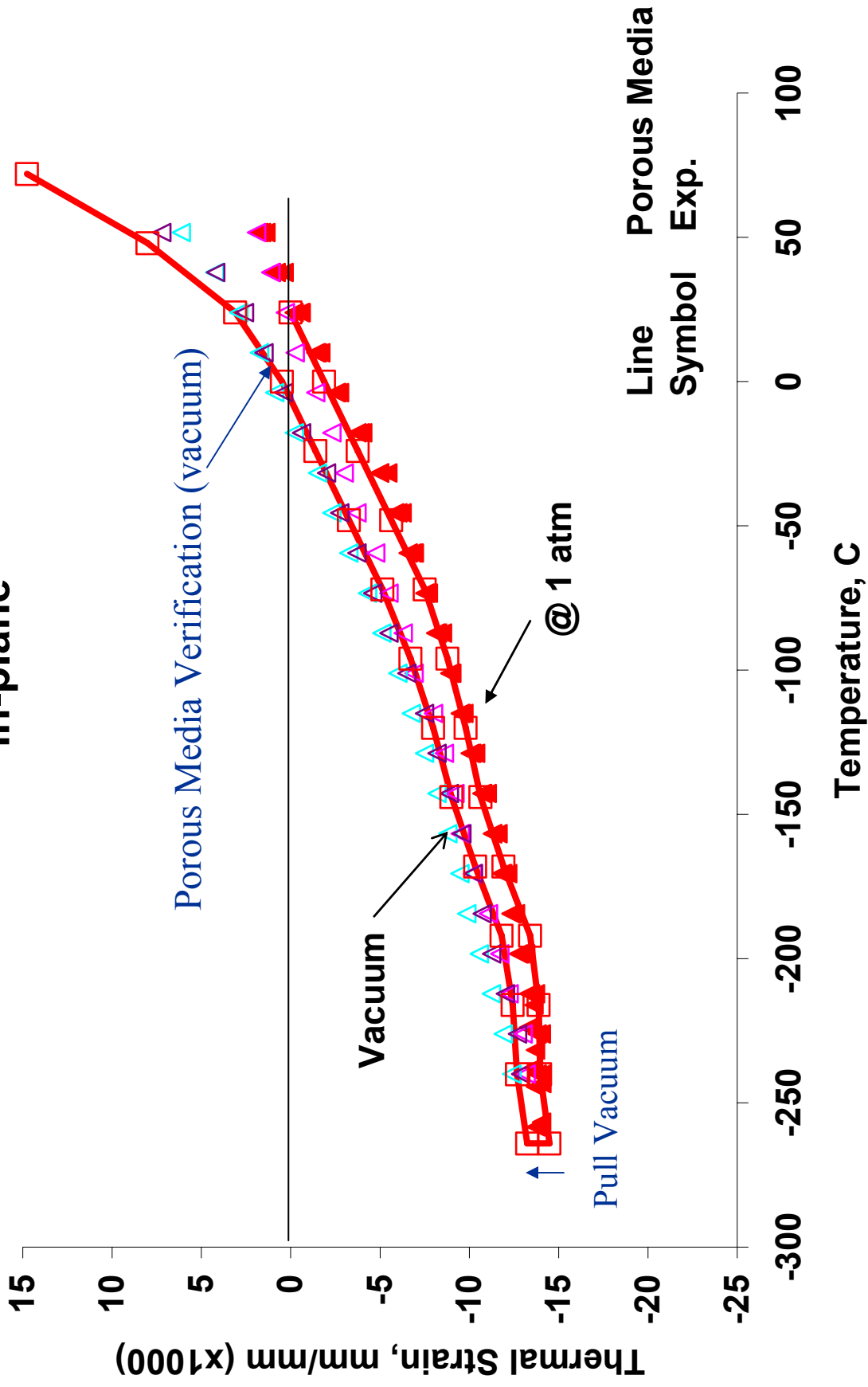
## NCFI-24-124 Rise



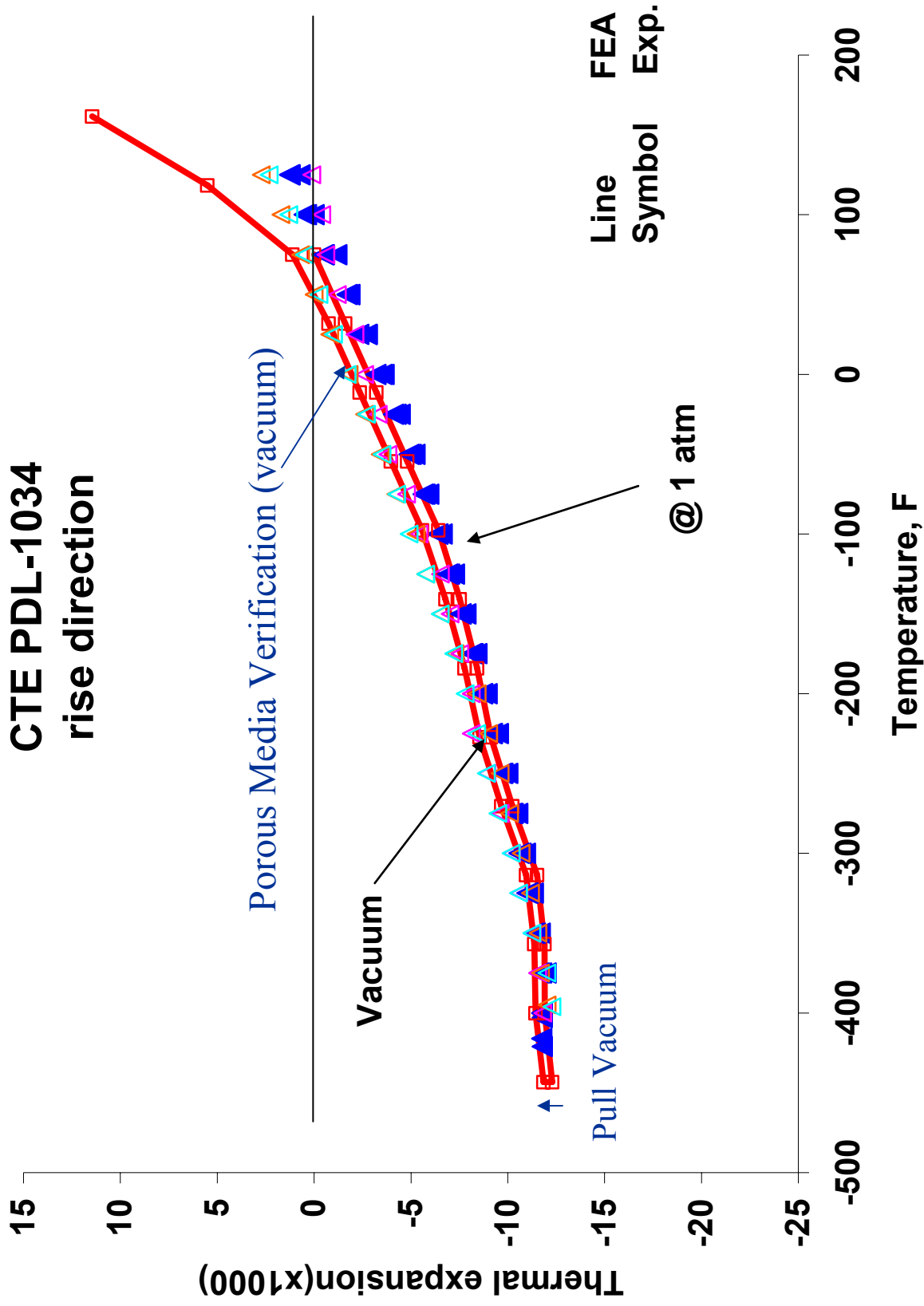
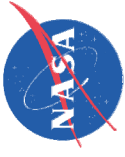
Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613



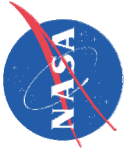
# CTE, PDL-1034 in-plane



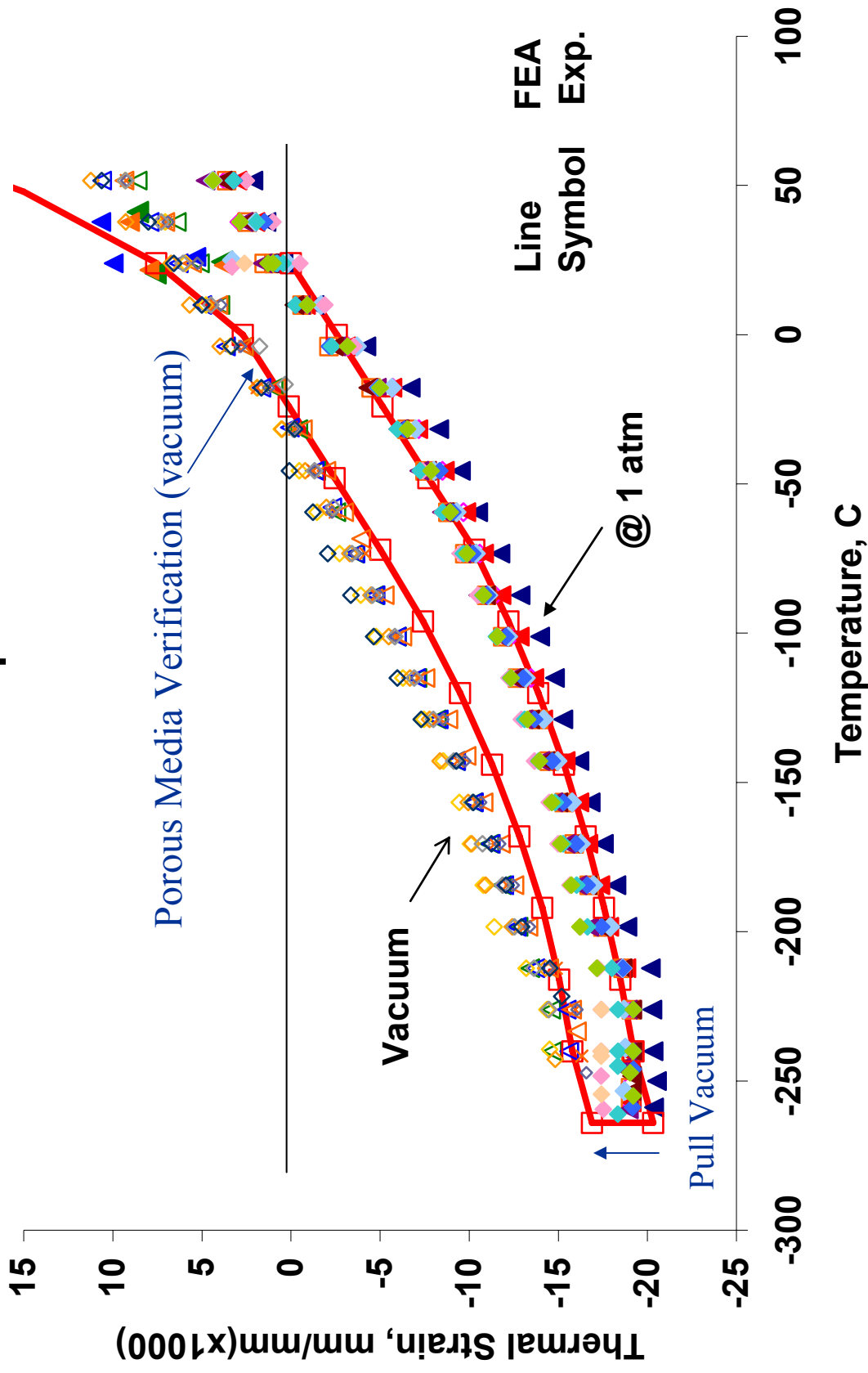
Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613



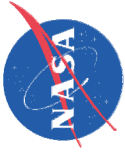
Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613



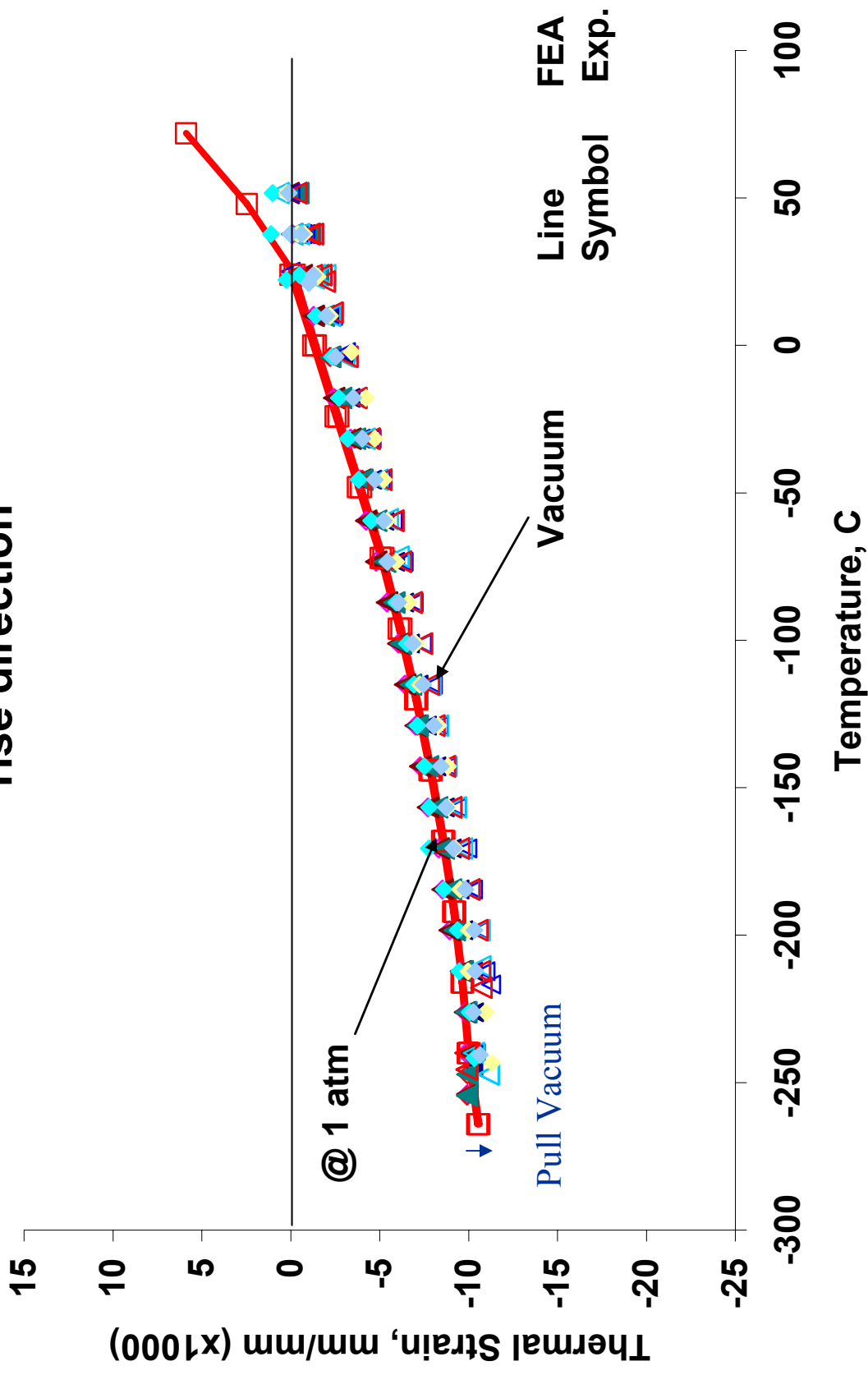
## CTE, BX-265 in-plane



Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613

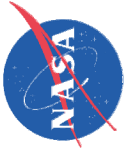


## CTE BX265 rise direction



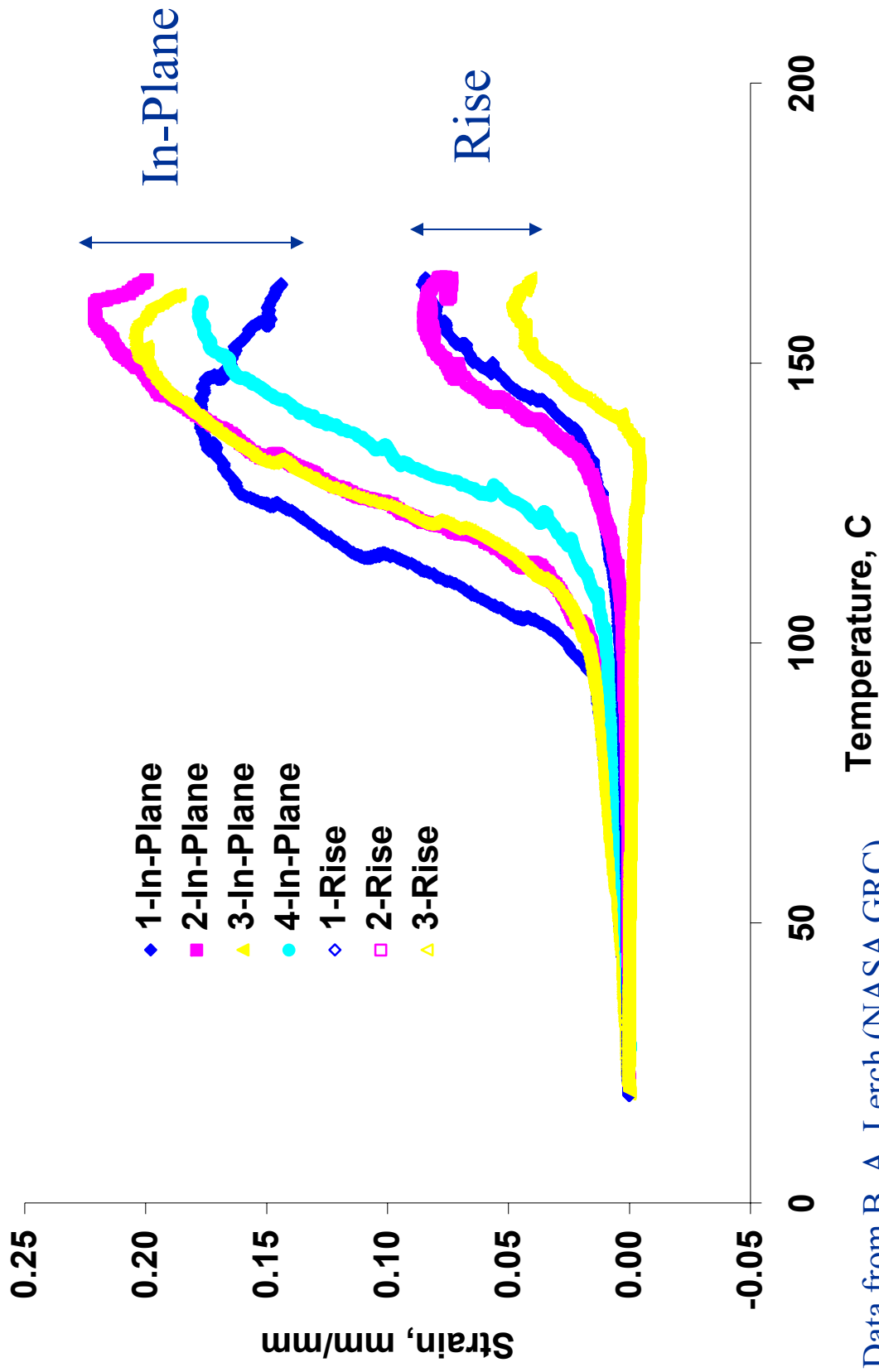
Data courtesy of E. Stokes: Thermal expansion of three ET Polyurethane and Polyisocyanurate foams 11613



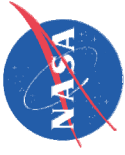


# High Temperature Thermal Strain

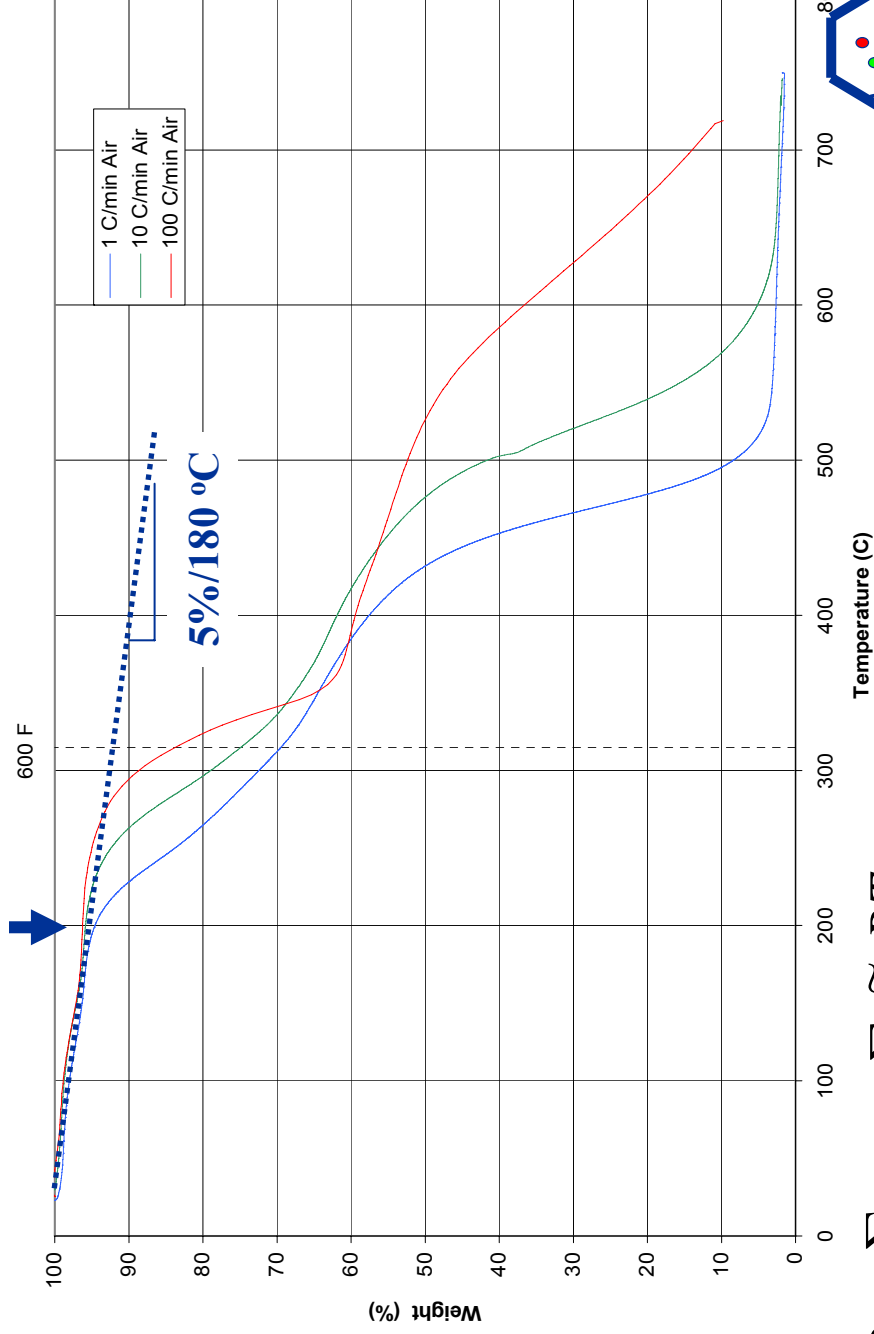
## Thermal Expansion BX-265



Data from B. A. Lerch (NASA GRC)



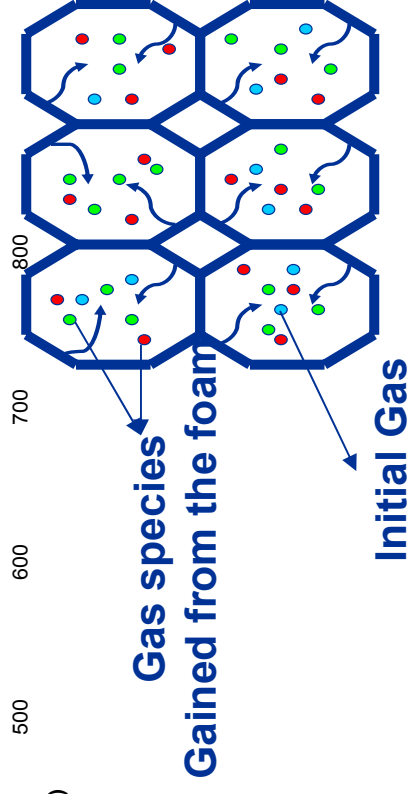
# Thermogravimetric Analysis of Pulverized BX-265

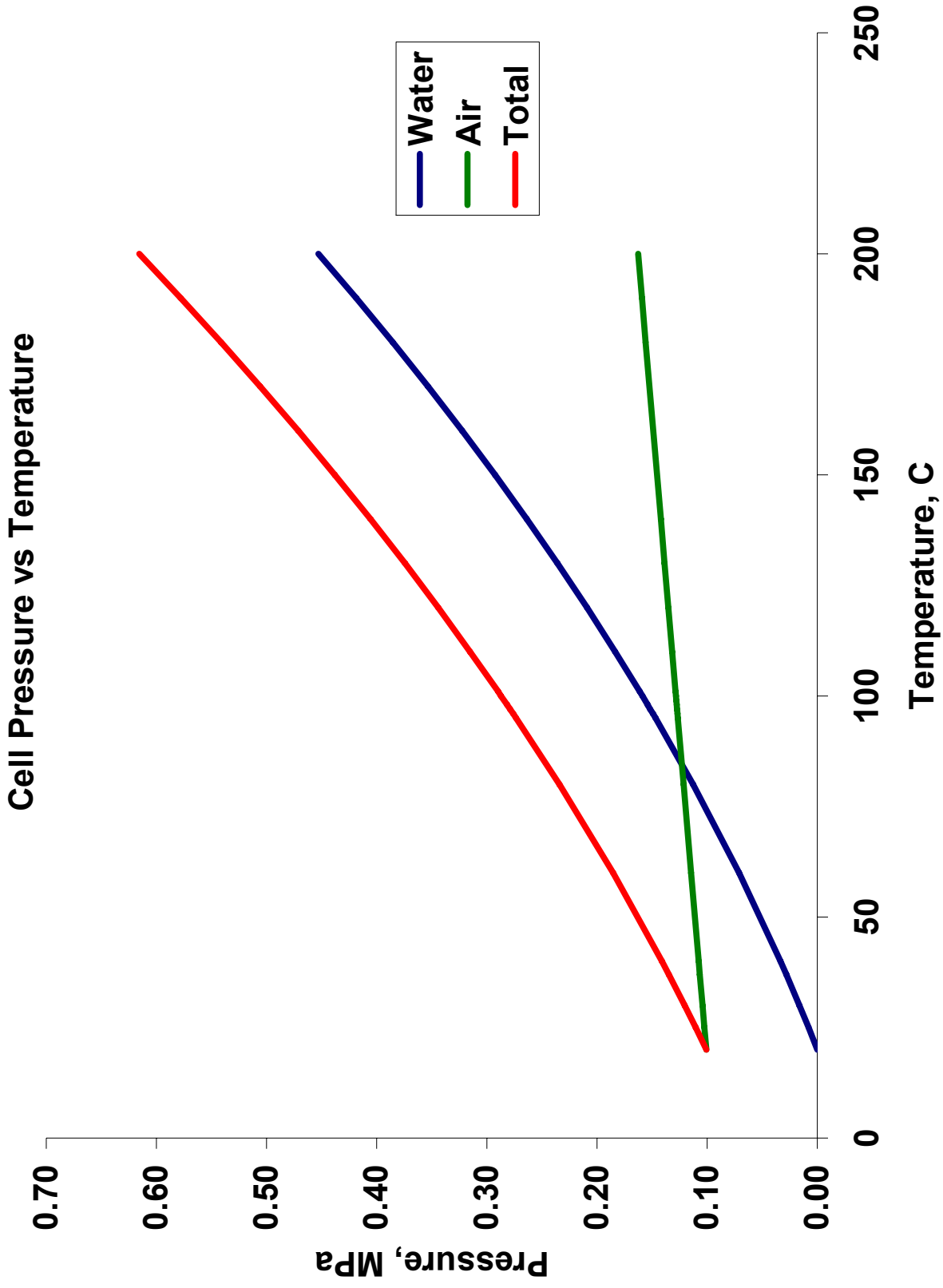
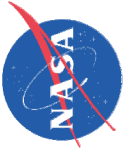


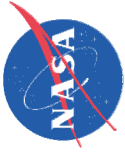
$$P = \sum p_i = \sum \tilde{\rho}_i RT$$

$\tilde{\rho}_i$ , the molar density of the  $i^{\text{th}}$  gas in the cells, given by

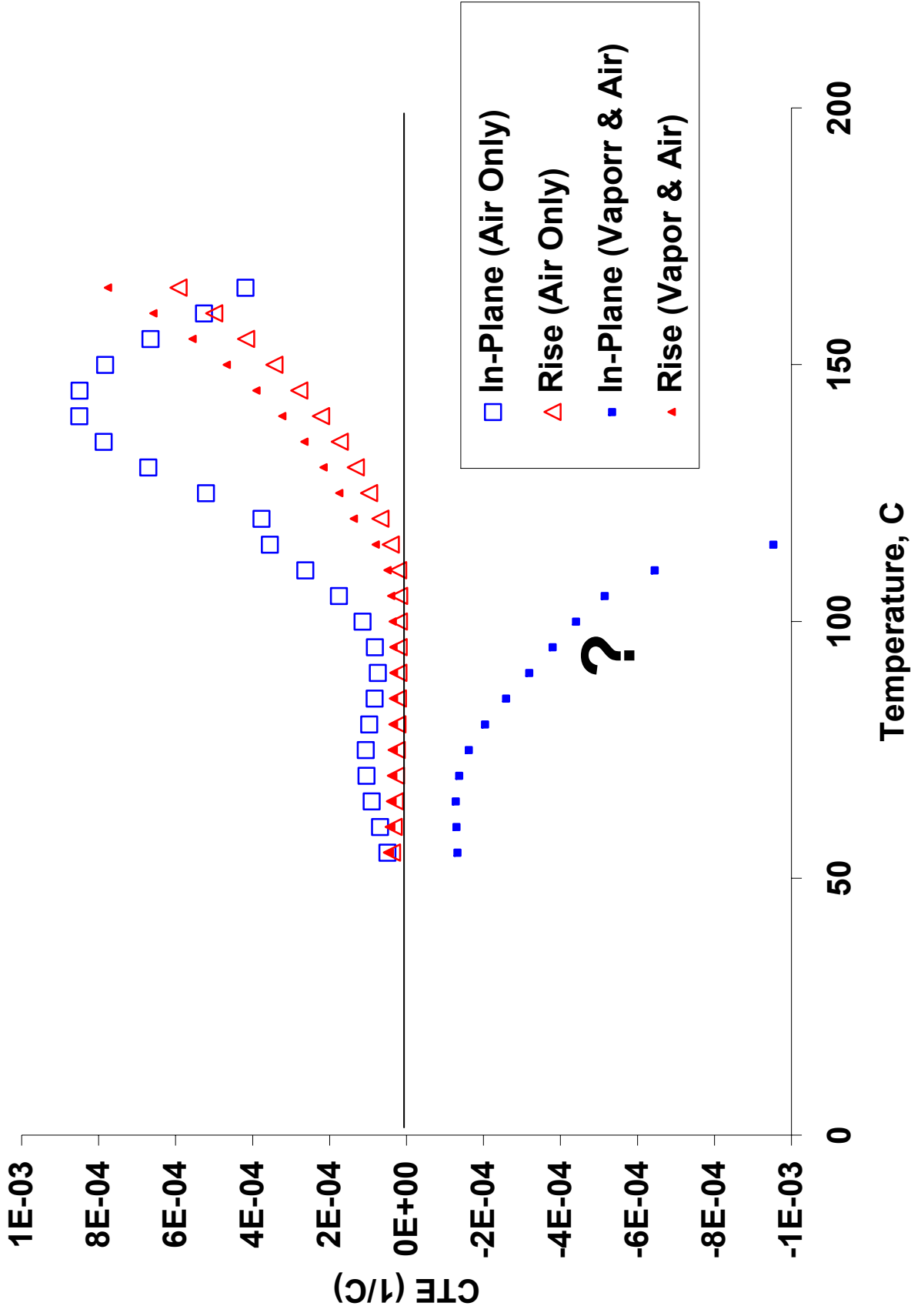
$$\tilde{\rho}_i = \tilde{\rho}_i^0 + \int_t \frac{d\rho_{i,s}}{dt} dt$$

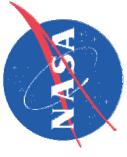




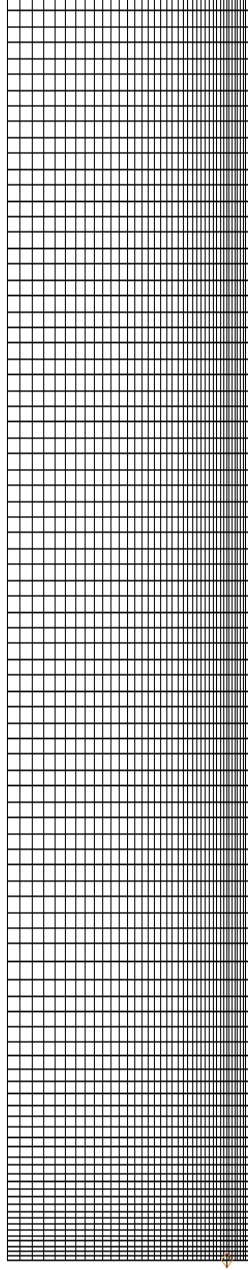
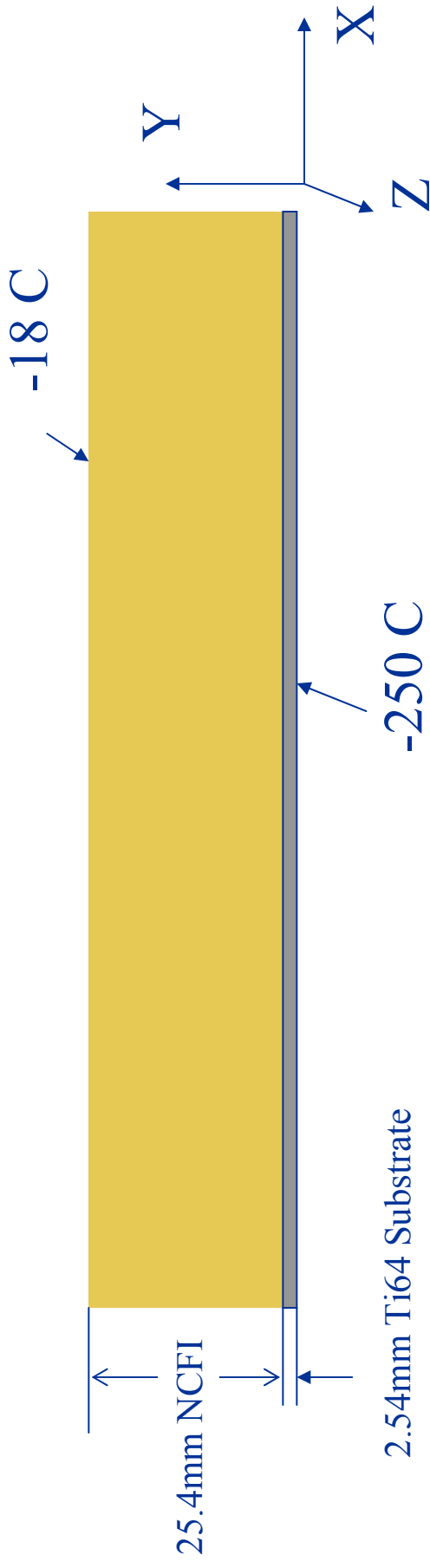


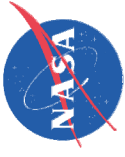
# Calibrated High temperature BX-265 CTE





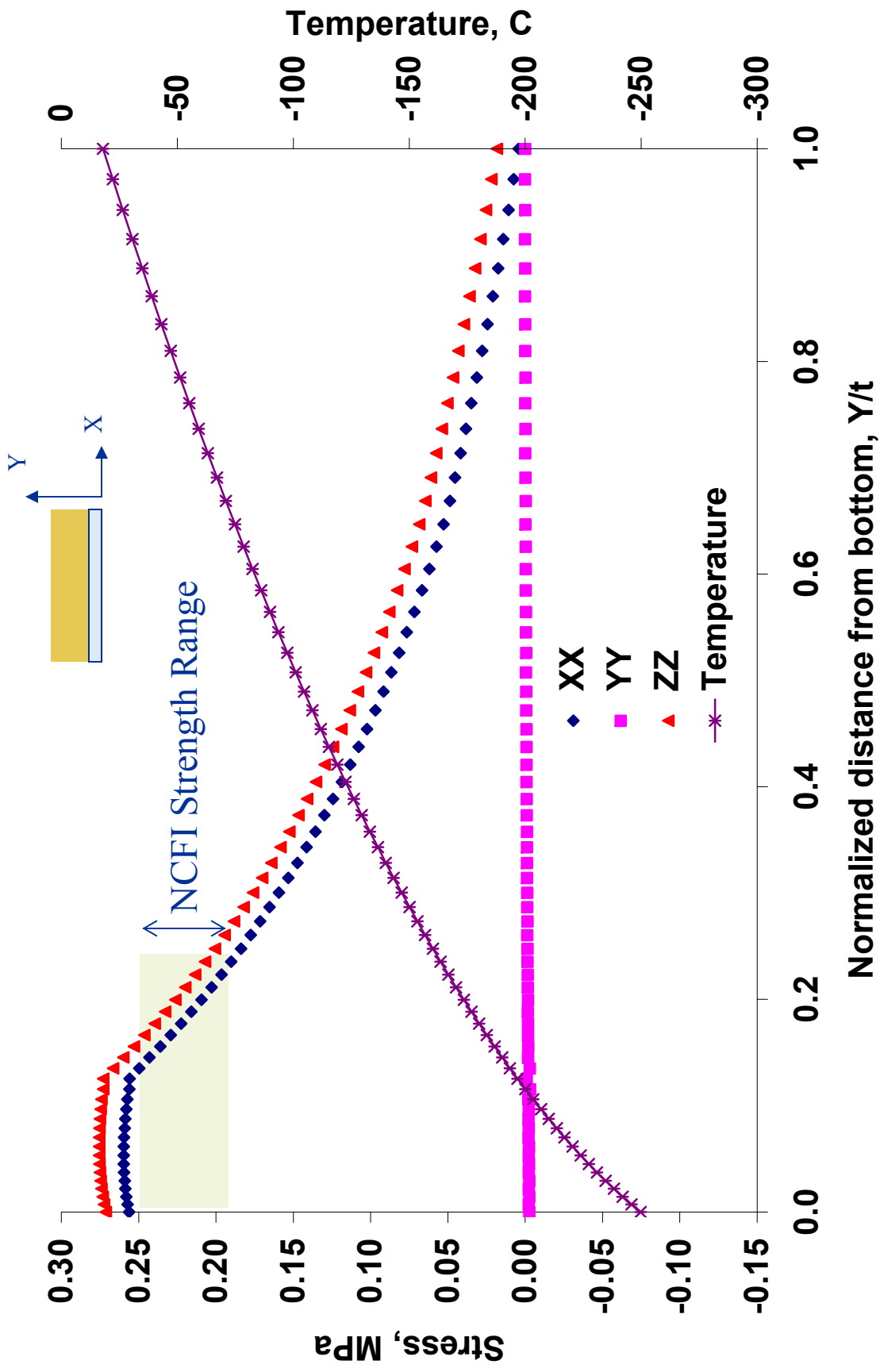
# Simple Example to Determine the Advantage of the Porous Media Formulation

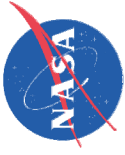




# Foam through thickness stress profiles

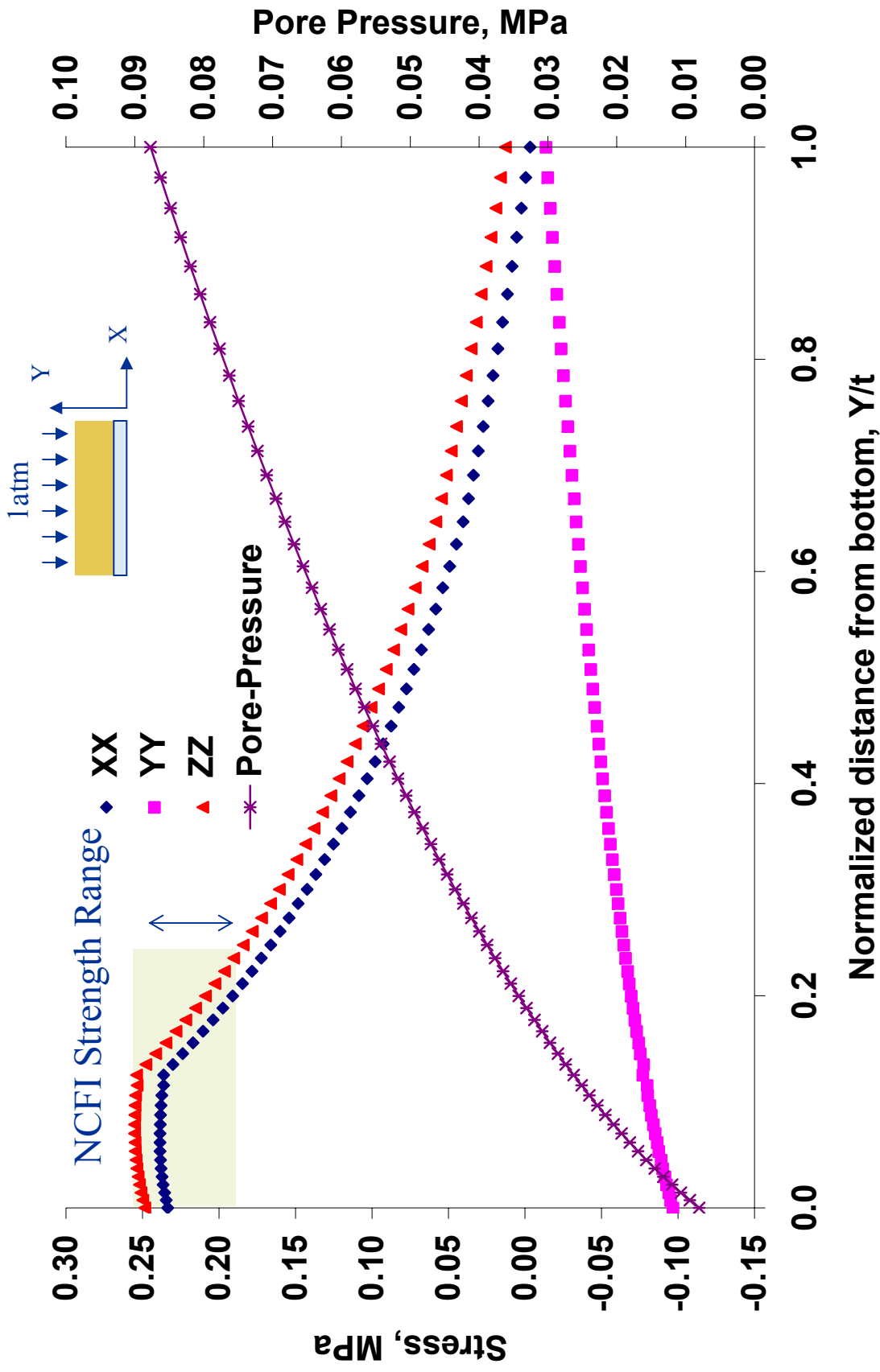
## Simple Elastic Solution

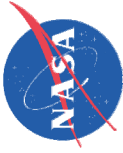




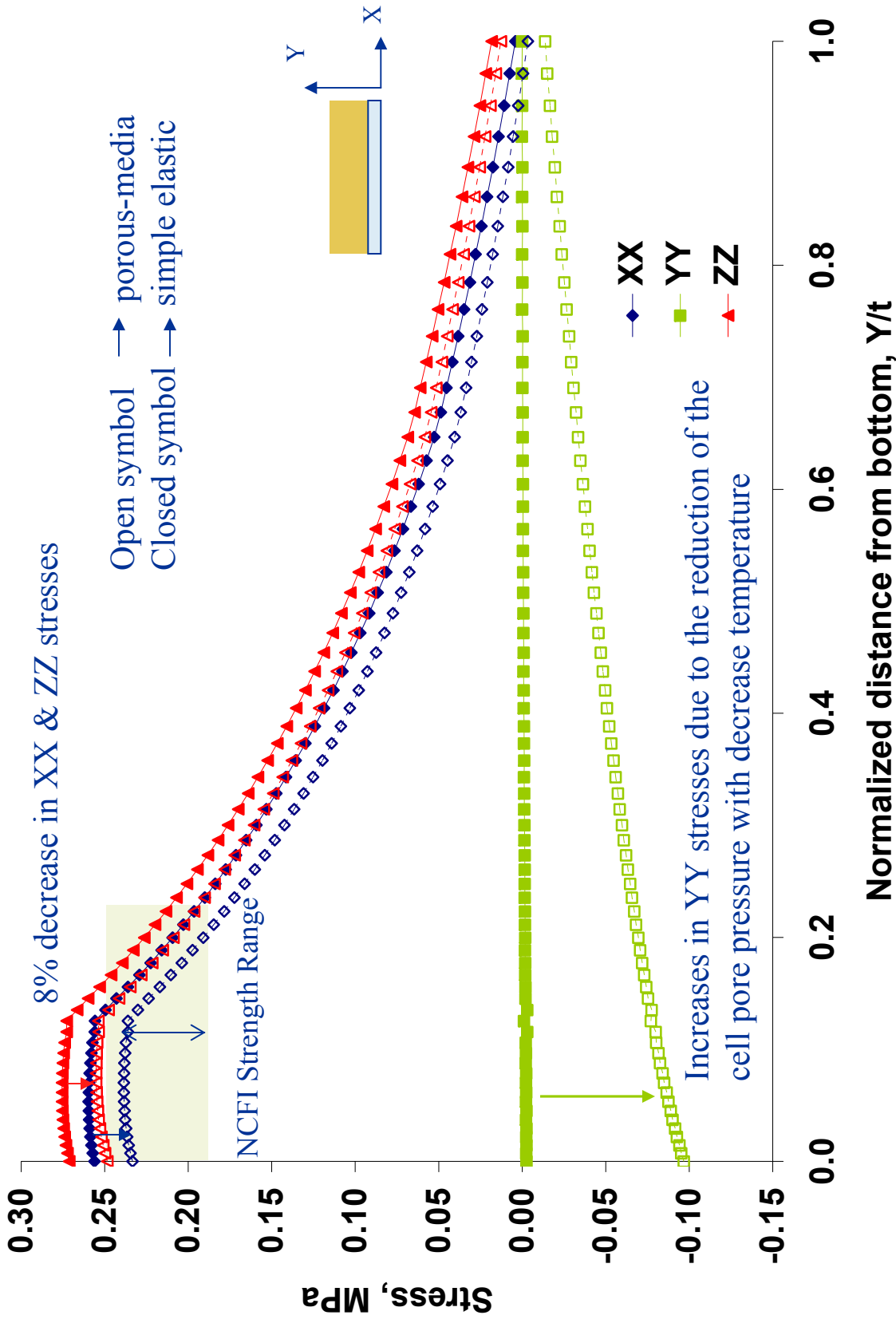
## Foam through thickness stress profiles

### Porous Media Solution

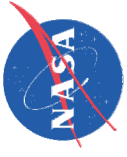




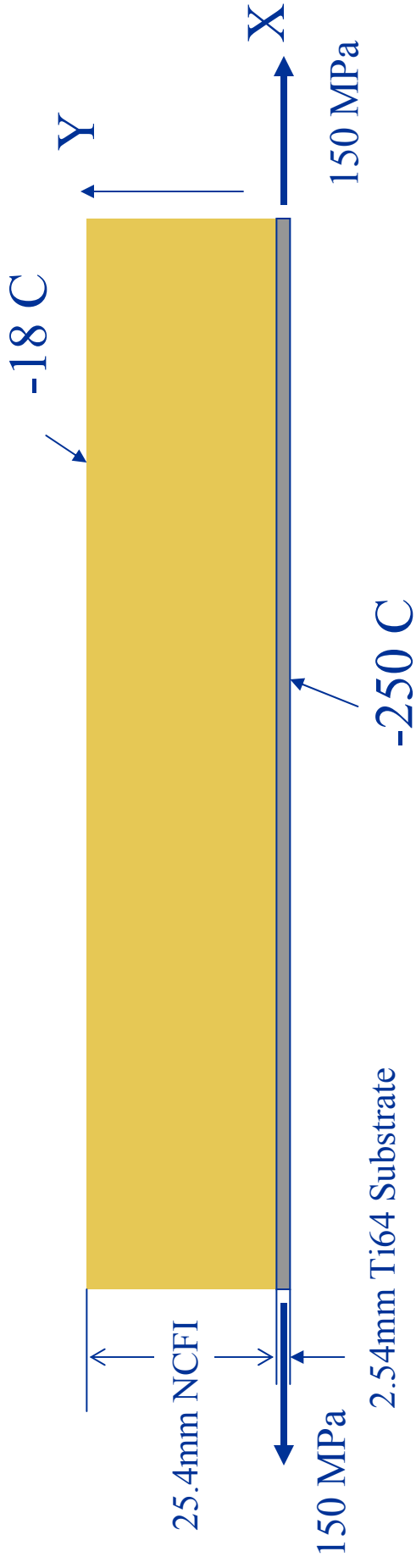
## Comparison of the stress distribution between the two methods

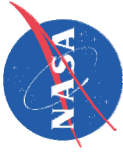




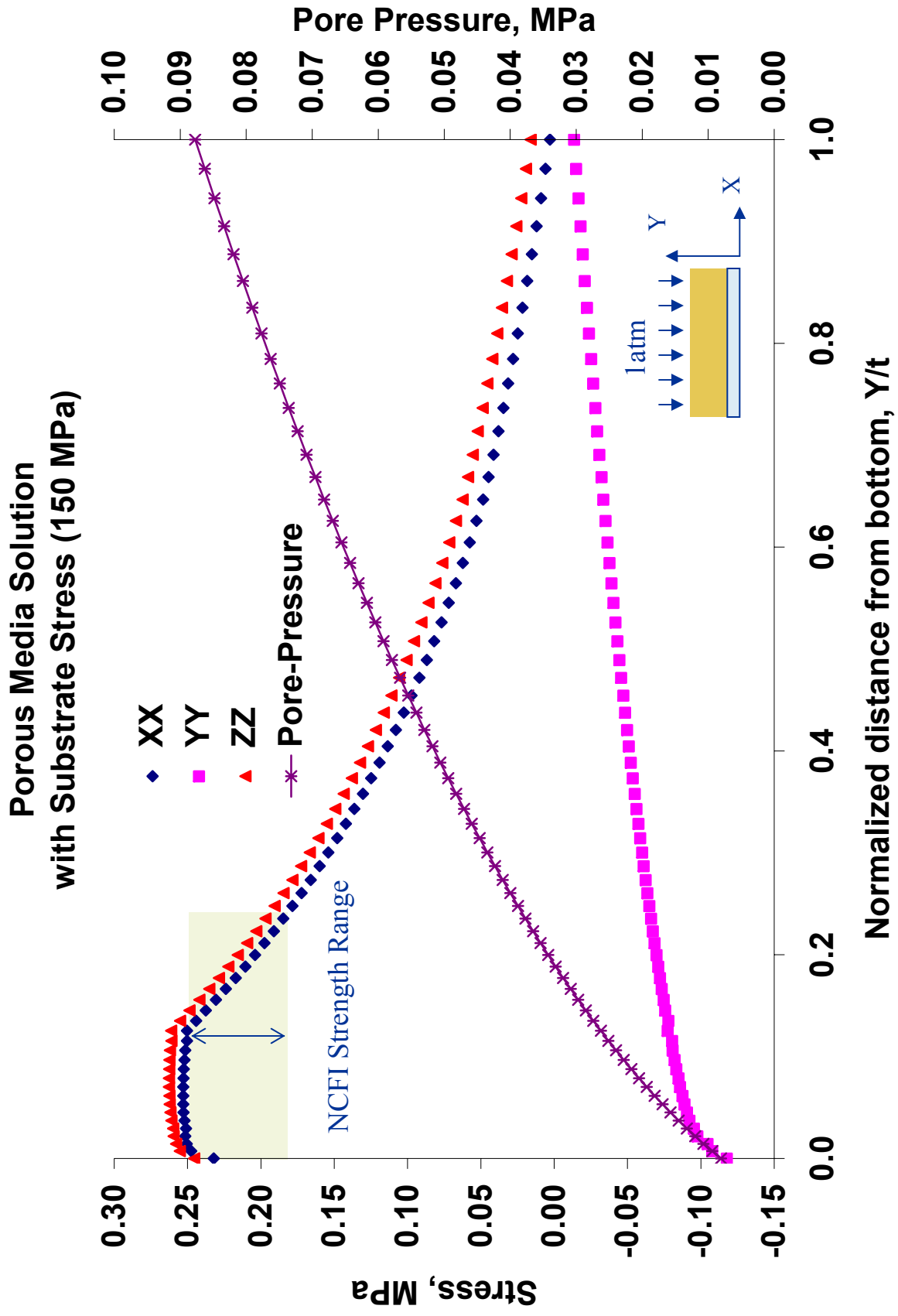


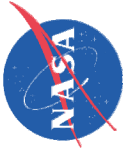
# Thermal Gradient with Substrate Stress



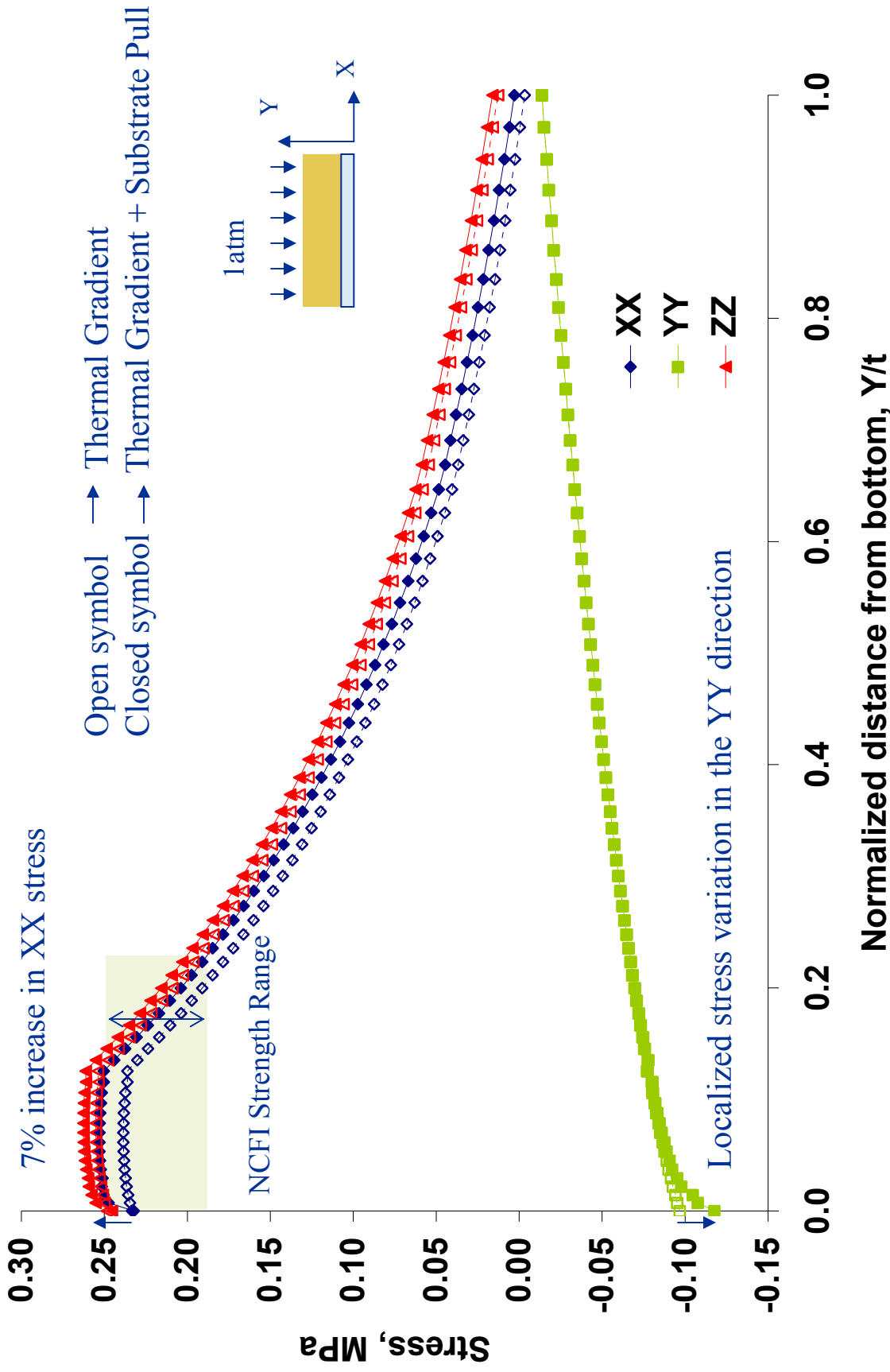


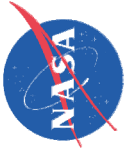
# Foam through thickness stress profiles



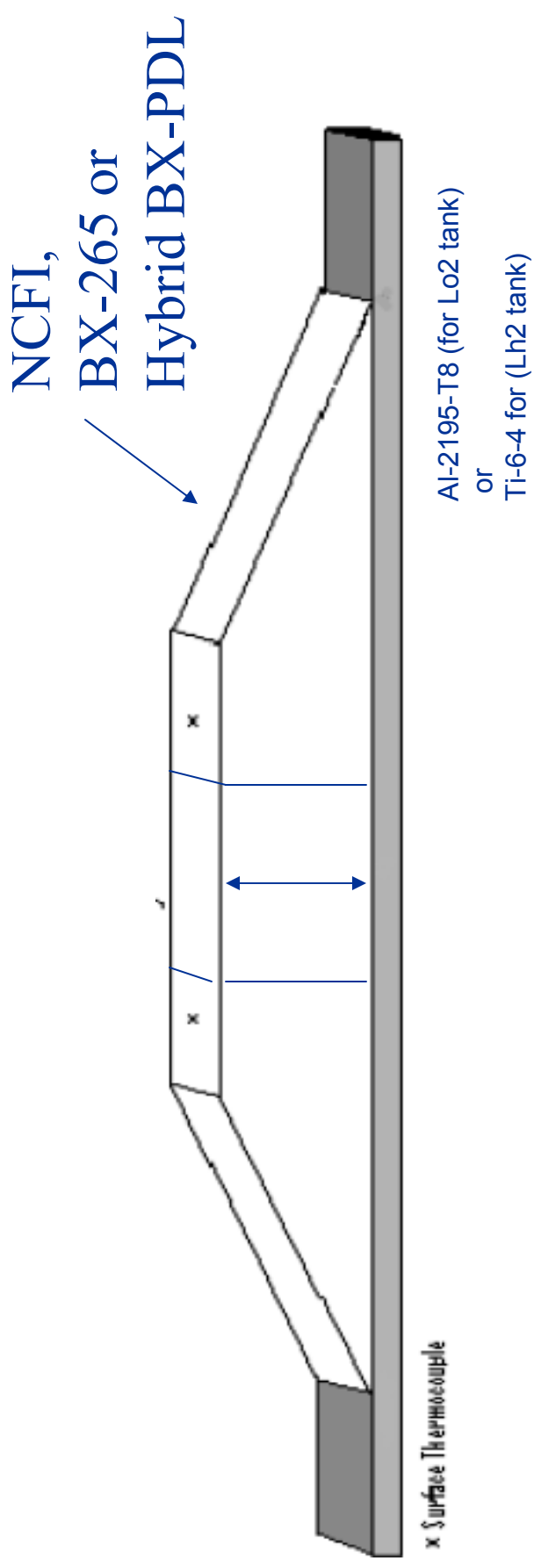


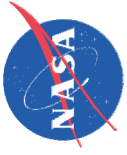
## Foam through thickness stress profiles



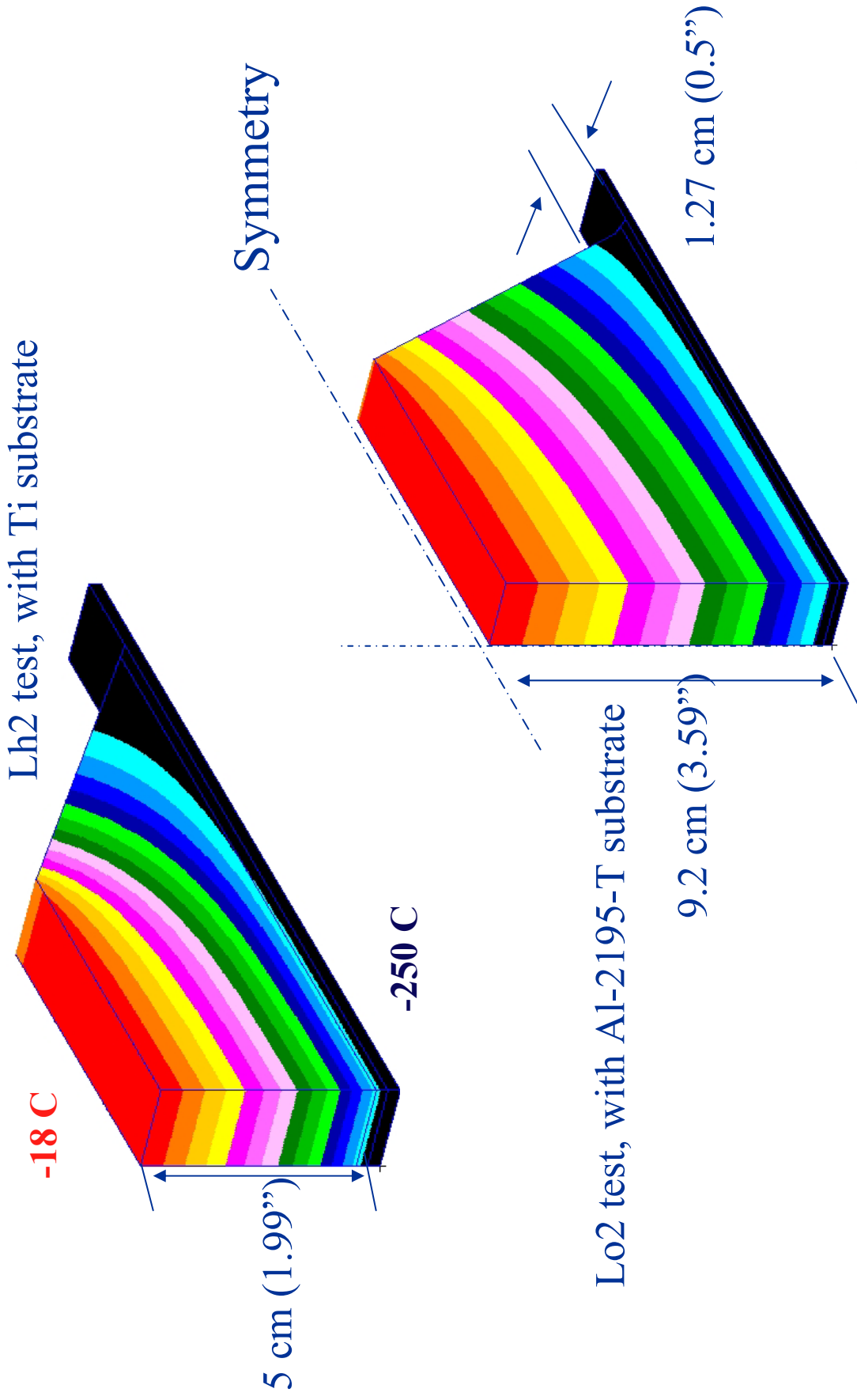


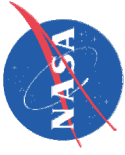
## Modeling the Cryoflex specimen



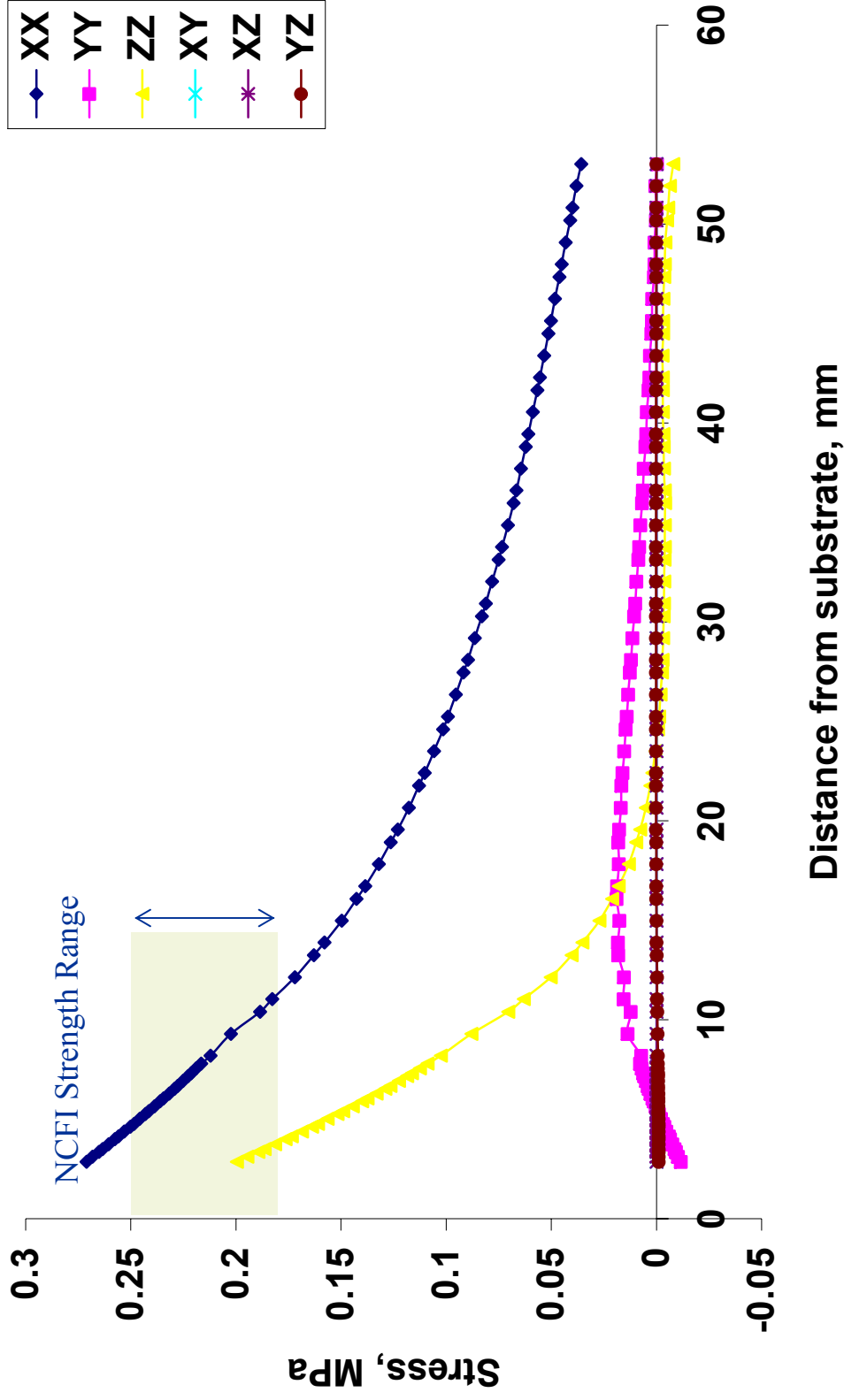


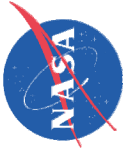
# Temperature Profile for Gradient Test



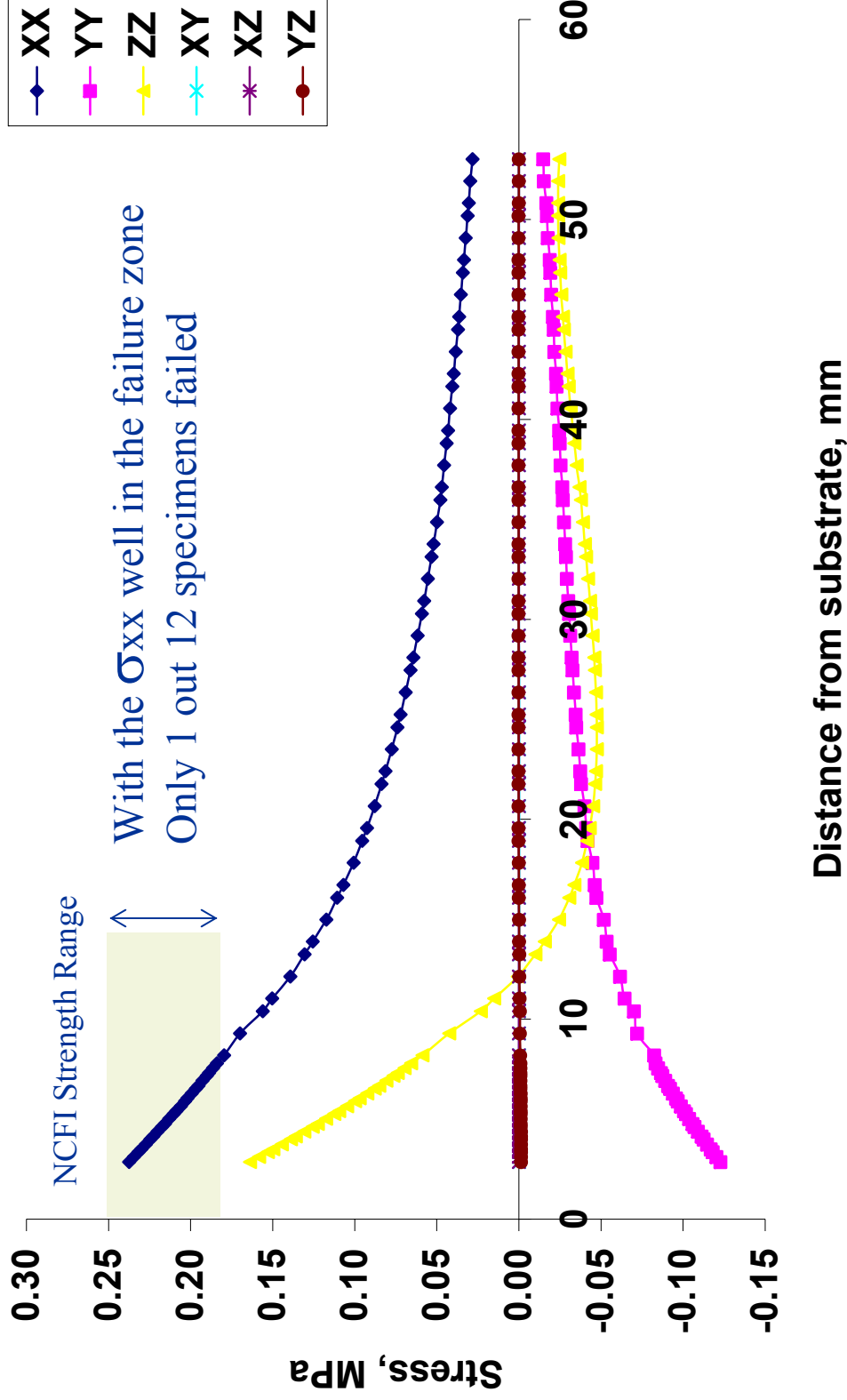


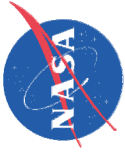
## LH2 Gradient (@-17.8C to -245C, 950MPa) No Slit, No Pore Pressure



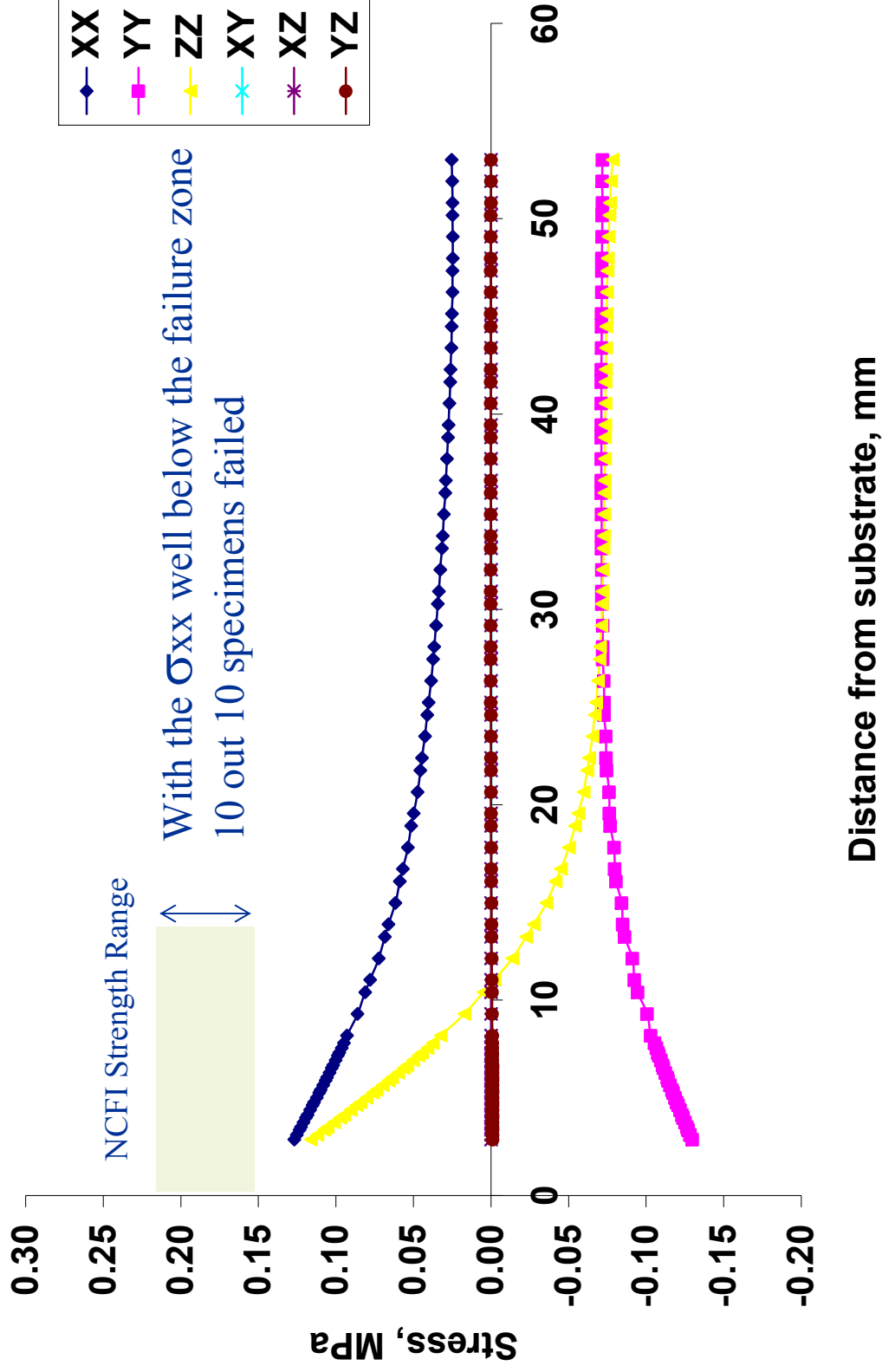


## LH2 Gradient (@-17.8C to -245C, 950MPa) No Slit, With Pore Pressure

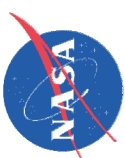




## LH2 Immersion (@-185C, 122MPa) No Slit, With Pore Pressure

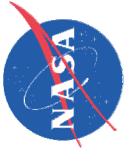






## Transversely isotropic material, Hyper-elliptic failure function

$$a_1(\sigma_{11}^2 + \sigma_{22}^2) + a_3(\sigma_{33}^2) + a_4(\sigma_{11} \cdot \sigma_{22}) + a_5(\sigma_{11}\sigma_{33} + \sigma_{22}\sigma_{33}) + a_7(\sigma_{11} + \sigma_{22}) + a_9\sigma_{33} \\ + (2a_1 - a_4)\sigma_{12}^2 + a_{11}(\sigma_{13}^2 + \sigma_{23}^2) = 1$$



## Summary

- The porous media approach was applied to three ET SOFI materials.
- The Anisotropic CTE tensors were derived to provide with good results for the strain variation as a function of temperature in vacuum.
- A high temperature CTE was derived based on TGA data showing an in-plane negative CTE.
- The implementation of the porous media into ABAQUS was outlined.
- The stress distribution of the cryoflex specimens were determined for the immersion and gradient tests.
- The maximum stress calculated was inconsistent with the experimentally observed failures.

## Future Work

- Investigate the soundness of a negative in-plane CTE for BX-265
- Develop a failure criteria for the cryoflex specimen based on the experimental observation and FEA results